

Neville McNee

..... was born and raised at Bombala, NSW in country more recognised by the exploits of the "Man from Snowy River." It was hard country settled by tough people, many of whom were Scottish immigrants. The district in the early days was beyond the limits of settlement, so families needed to be self sufficient and over time the squattocracy built up significant pastoral enterprises. For sporting endeavours, the locals had a strong preference for rugby union.

In the early to mid 1920's, Bombala and district was a rugby union stronghold, resisting attempts by the NSW rugby league to establish a local competition. The driving force was E. G. Shaw, a local pastoralist and businessman. Shaw was previously a State rugby union player and went on to manage the Australian Wallabies tour to England in 1927. The local rugby union representative team, Southern Monaro as well as the premier union team in the district, Bibbenluke, for which Neville McNee played, over a number of years hosted and also visited the Manly Rugby Union team that was based in Sydney.

The Manly Rugby Union team in those years was a very capable outfit. In 1926 the Manly team contained international and state players Cyril Towers, Bruce Judd and R. Loudon. Manly played against Bibbenluke, who was captained by Neville McNee, and the favored Manly side went down to the locals 11-16.

The local rugby union players at the end of 1926 sought higher honors after competing so well against the Sydney team. With a Wallabies tour to England coming up in 1927, E. G. Shaw put a number of names forward to the Union authorities including Neville McNee, however it appears that the local players were overlooked.

This in part may have given rise to the establishment of a rugby league competition in the Monaro district in 1927. Neville McNee remained with Bibbenluke in 1927 but found his way to Sydney in 1928, and joined up with Wests.

Neville McNee worked his way up through the lower grades with Wests and made his First Grade debut in 1929. He did not play beyond 1929. During his two seasons at Wests, Neville McNee played three First Grade, twenty three Reserve Grade and two Third Grade games .

Neville McNee settled in Sydney and worked for the Department of Housing as an Assistant to the Quantity Surveyor. He lived his later life in the Lake Macquarie suburb of Valentine where he died in March 1993. His service was at the All Saints Anglican Church at Belmont and his ashes were scattered in the memorial garden.